

Margaret Dore

Dear Committee Members:

I am a Democrat and a lawyer in Washington State where assisted suicide is legal.

Our law is modeled on a similar law in Oregon. Both laws are similar to H.B. No. 5326.

Below is a link to a memo I wrote, which provides a legal analysis of H.B. No. 5326. Here are five highlights:

1. H.B. No. 5326 is a recipe for elder abuse

"Financial considerations [are] an all too common motivation for killing someone."
(memo, page 7)

Your heir, who will financially benefit from your death, is allowed to act as a witness on the lethal dose request form. See H.B. No. 5326, Section 3 (allowing one of two witnesses to be an heir)

There is a complete lack of oversight once the lethal dose is issued by the pharmacy. Not even a witness is required. Even if you struggled, who would know?

2. H.B. No. 5326 encourages non-dying people to throw away their lives.

H.B. No. 5326 applies to patients with a "terminal illness," which is defined in terms of a doctor's prediction of less than six months to live. (memo, pages 4-5).

In Oregon, a similar definition is being interpreted to include people with chronic conditions such as diabetes. (Id.)

The six months to live is determined without treatment. Consider, for example, my friend, Jeanette Hall, who had cancer and who was adamant that she would "do" Oregon's law. Her doctor convinced her to be treated instead. She is thrilled to be alive today, nearly 14 years later. (memo, pages 5-6)

3. H.B. No. 5326 will allow health care providers and insurers to steer people to suicide

In Oregon, the Oregon Health Plan steers patients to assisted suicide. (Memo pages 17-20). See also the affidavit of Oregon doctor Ken Stevens, in the appendix at A-24, which is also attached here: <http://maasdocuments.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/signed-stevens-aff-9-18-12.pdf>

See also this letter by Kathryn Judson (describing how she overheard a doctor pitching assisted suicide to her husband) <http://www.choiceillusion.org/2013/12/i-was-afraid-to-leave-my-husband-alone.html>

Do you want this to happen to you or your family?

4. I have had two clients whose fathers signed up for the lethal dose.

In the first case, one side of the family wanted the father to take the lethal dose, while the other did not. He spent the last months of his life caught in the middle and traumatized over whether or not he should kill himself. My client, his adult daughter, was also traumatized. The father did not take the lethal dose and died a natural death. (Memo, page 22)

In the other case, it's not clear that administration of the lethal dose was voluntary. A man who was present told my client that the father refused to take the lethal dose when it was delivered (?You're not killing me. I'm going to bed?), but then took it the next night when he was high on alcohol. The man who told this to my client later recanted. My client did not want to pursue the matter further. (Memo, pages 22-3)

Do you want this to happen to you or your family?

5. Two weeks ago, a similar bill was defeated by a 3 to 1 margin

On March 6, 2014, the New Hampshire House, which is controlled by the Democrats, defeated a bill similar to H.B. No. 5326.

The vote was 219 to 66.

See [here](#).

Here is the link to my memo:

http://choiceisanillusion.files.wordpress.com/2014/03/ct-5326-legal-analysis_001.pdf

I urge you to not make Washington's mistake.

Please vote No on H.B. 5326.

Thank you.

Margaret Dore

Law Offices of Margaret K. Dore, P.S.

www.margaretdore.com

www.choiceillusion.org

1001 4th Avenue, 44th Floor

Seattle, WA 98154

206 389 1754 main reception line

206 389 1562 direct line